

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 744

By Griffey

A RESOLUTION to honor Hank Williams, Jr., on the occasion of his induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pay tribute to those talented musical artists who have reached the very pinnacle of the country music industry; and

WHEREAS, one such individual is Hank Williams, Jr., who received country music's highest honor when he was formally inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame by the Country Music Association on November 21, 2021; and

WHEREAS, Hank Williams, Jr., also known professionally as "Bocephus," was born Randall Hank Williams on May 26, 1949, in Shreveport, Louisiana, and moved to Nashville a month later, when his father, Country Music Hall of Fame member Hank Williams, accepted an invitation to join the Grand Ole Opry; and

WHEREAS, after his father's death in 1953, he was raised by his mother, Audrey Williams; under her guidance, Hank Williams, Jr., performed his first concert at the age of eight, joining the Audrey Williams Musical Caravan of Stars, a tour that included the Big Bopper and Carl Perkins; and

WHEREAS, Hank Williams, Jr., appeared as a guest on the Grand Ole Opry at the age of eleven; he released his first album, featuring covers of his father's songs, and performed on television's *Jimmy Dean Show*, *Ed Sullivan Show*, and *Shindig!* at fourteen. By the age of twenty, he had already scored eleven Top Forty country hits and had released twenty-one albums, including a greatest hits compilation; and

WHEREAS, as he matured and his musical interests expanded, Mr. Williams sought to emerge from his famous father's shadow and create a musical style and persona of his own. In

1974, he moved from Nashville to Cullman, Alabama, with the intention of changing his life and his creative path; and

WHEREAS, in February 1975, he began work on his twenty-sixth studio album, enlisting contributions from Southern rockers Toy Caldwell of the Marshall Tucker Band, Charlie Daniels, and Chuck Leavell of the Allman Brothers. To celebrate the album's completion, Mr. Williams embarked on a hunting trip to Montana; on August 8, 1975, he slipped on an icy ledge atop Ajax Peak and fell five hundred feet down a jagged slope, suffering massive head injuries; and

WHEREAS, Hank Williams, Jr., underwent several operations and spent eight months recovering from the fall. While recuperating, his Southern rock album breakthrough, *Hank Williams Jr. & Friends*, was released; merging country music with Delta blues and country rock, the album drew critical acclaim and attracted new, younger fans but received backlash from the Nashville music community and some of his older fans; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Williams stayed the course, creating a sound that was bold, boisterous, defiant, outspoken, and often intensely biographical; his 1979 album, *Family Tradition*, sold well, as did its follow-up, *Whiskey Bent and Hellbound*, with the title songs from both albums becoming his first Top Five hits in six years; and

WHEREAS, in concert, Hank Williams, Jr., would display his talents on multiple instruments, from acoustic and electric guitar to piano, fiddle, banjo, and steel guitar; his repertoire of instrumental skills also includes bass guitar, saxophone, harmonica, and drums; and

WHEREAS, his hot streak lasted more than a decade; Mr. Williams released twenty-one gold- and platinum-selling albums between 1979 and 1992, including the five-million-selling *Hank Williams Jr.'s Greatest Hits*, released in 1982; and

WHEREAS, Hank Williams Jr.'s remarkable string of hit songs includes "Texas Women," "Dixie on My Mind," "All My Rowdy Friends (Have Settled Down)," "A Country Boy Can Survive," "Leave Them Boys Alone" with Waylon Jennings and Ernest Tubb, "Man of Steel," "All My Rowdy Friends Are Coming Over Tonight," "I'm for Love," "Ain't Misbehavin'," "Country State of

Mind," "Born to Boogie," "Young Country," and "There's a Tear in My Beer," a digitally created duet with his late father; and

WHEREAS, with the success of his concert tours, Mr. Williams helped take country music into sports arenas; he was named CMA Entertainer of the Year twice, in 1987 and 1988, and ACM Entertainer of the Year three times, from 1987 to 1989; and

WHEREAS, Hank Williams, Jr., won four Emmy Awards for composing the theme song for *Monday Night Football*, and he was inducted into the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame in 2007; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Williams is one of the most versatile performers in the history of country music; his immeasurable talent and innovative approach have enabled him to leave an indelible mark on this art form and have secured for him his rightful place as an icon in its remarkable archives; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we recognize the illustrious career and extraordinary musical talents of Hank Williams, Jr., as he savors this very special milestone; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor and congratulate Hank Williams, Jr., on the occasion of his induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame, salute his legendary musical talent as a performing artist and entertainer, and applaud his singular contributions to country music.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.